

Message Text

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ACTION L-02

INFO OCT-01 EUR-08 IO-04 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 PM-03 H-01

INR-05 NSAE-00 NSC-05 PA-01 RSC-01 PRS-01 SP-02 SS-20

USIA-06 ACDA-05 OIC-01 DPW-01 SAJ-01 SAM-01 AID-05

MC-01 AEC-05 AF-04 ARA-06 EA-06 NEA-06 DRC-01 /103 W

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R 111406Z OCT 74

FM AMEMBASSY BERN

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 9689

INFO USUN NEW YORK 143

USMISSION GENEVA

USDEL SALT GENEVA

USDEL MBFR VIENNA

C O N F I D E N T I A L BERN 3830

GENEVA PASS CCD AND CSCE

FROM USDEL TO LUCERNE ICRC CONFERENCE ON WEAPONS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: ICRC, PARM

SUBJECT: ICRC CONFERENCE ON WEAPONS - INCENDIARY WEAPONS

REF: A) BERN 3727; B) BERN 3729

1. WORKING GROUP ON CLASSIFICATION OF INCENDIARY WEAPONS ESTABLISHED BY CONFERENCE CHAIRMAN (REFTELS) DETERMINED DEFINITION OF AN INCENDIARY WEAPON OR MUNITION WAS ESSENTIAL. SEVERAL PROPOSALS (VENEZUELA, U.K., SWISS AND US) WERE PUT FORWARD AND A SMALL SUB-GROUP (AUSTRALIA, SWEDEN, UK, US, SWISS) WAS SET UP TO WORK OUT A DEFINITION WHICH COULD BE WIDELY IF NOT UNANIMOUSLY ACCEPTED BY THE WHOLE WORKING GROUP.

2. SWEDISH EXPERT (BLIX) DURING DISCUSSION IN
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PLENARY SESSION STRONGLY ADVOCATED COMPLETE PRO-

HIBITION OF INCENDIARY WEAPONS. IN SUB-WORKING GROUP ON DEFINITION SWISS AND SWEDES SOUGHT TO EXCLUDE FROM DEFINITION OF INCENDIARY WEAPON ALL ANTI-AIRCRAFT AND ANTI-ARMOR WEAPONS. SUCH A FORMULATION OBVIOUSLY RESERVES FOR SWEDES AND SWISS INCENDIARY WEAPONS TO MEET THEIR MILITARY REQUIREMENTS (ANTI-TANK AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT) DESPITE THEIR PUBLIC POSITION OF ADVOCATING A GENERAL BAN. THEIR RATIONALE WAS THAT INCENDIARY EFFECT IN SUCH WEAPONS WAS SUBORDINATE TO FIRST REQUIREMENT OF PENETRATION OF ARMOR OR AIRCRAFT SKIN. THE SUB-GROUP REACHED NO AGREEMENT ON THIS POINT AND THE MATTER RECEIVED PROLONGED DEBATE BY THE WORKING GROUP.

3. AFTER NUMEROUS ALTERNATIVE AND COMPROMISE PROPOSALS, FOLLOWING DEFINITION WAS ADOPTED BY THE WORKING GROUP:

QUOTE

FOR THE PURPOSES OF THIS CONFERENCE, AN INCENDIARY MUNITION HAS BEEN CONSIDERED TO BE ANY MUNITION WHICH IS PRIMARILY DESIGNED TO SET FIRE TO OBJECTS OR TO CAUSE BURN INJURY TO PERSONS THROUGH THE ACTION OF FLAME AND/OR HEAT PRODUCED BY A CHEMICAL REACTION OF A SUBSTANCE DELIVERED ON THE TARGET.

UNQUOTE

IN THEIR REPORT, THE WORKING GROUP STATED:

QUOTE

THE WORKING GROUP ALSO RECOGNIZED THE EXISTENCE OF SOME CATEGORIES OF MUNITIONS WHICH MAY HAVE SECONDARY OR INCIDENTAL INCENDIARY EFFECT BUT WHICH DO NOT FALL WITHIN THE DEFINITION STATED ABOVE. SOME EXAMPLES ARE:

(1) ILLUMINANTS; (2) TRACERS; (3) SMOKE; (4) SIGNALLING SYSTEMS; (5) FUEL AIR EXPLOSIVES." ALTHOUGH SWEDES PRESSED HARD FOR A STATEMENT WHICH WOULD EXCLUDE ARMOR PIERCING INCENDIARIES AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT PROJECTILES OR AT A MINIMUM SET THESE WEAPONS APART FOR SPECIAL CONSIDERATION, THEIR EFFORT RECEIVED NO SUPPORT FROM OTHER EXPERTS AND WORKING GROUP ADOPTED FOLLOWING STATEMENT WITH ONLY SWEDEN OBJECTING:

QUOTE

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THE WORKING GROUP RECOGNIZED THE FACT THAT THERE EXIST INCENDIARY MUNITIONS SUCH AS CERTAIN ARMOUR PIERCING AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT PROJECTILES THAT COMBINE THEIR INCENDIARY EFFECT WITH OTHER DESTRUCTIVE EFFECTS WHICH ASSIST IN ACHIEVING THE PURPOSES OF THE MUNITION.

UNQUOTE

IT WOULD NOW APPEAR THAT SWEDEN WILL HAVE DIFFICULTY PRESSING ANY GENERAL BAN ON INCENDIARIES AS THEY SEEM

MOST INTERESTED IN RETAINING ANTI-AIRCRAFT INCENDIARIES AND ARMOR PIERCING INCENDIARIES IN THEIR OWN ARSENAL. IN PRIVATE CONVERSATION BETWEEN DELOFF AND SWEDISH DELEGATION IT WAS LEARNED THAT IN SWEDISH MINISTRY OF DEFENSE THEIR IS JOINT PAPER WHICH WOULD REQUIRE FOR THEIR DEFENSE FORCES RETENTION OF RIGHT TO USE ARMOR PIERCING AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT INCENDIARIES.

4. WORKING GROUP REPORTED TO PLENARY SESSION ON OCT. 9. IN ADDITION TO DISTRIBUTING ABOVE DEFINITION AND COMMENT IT WAS NOTED THAT MATTER OF CATEGORIES OF INCENDIARIES WILL NOW BE CONSIDERED BY WORKING GROUP. WE DO NOT ANTICIPATE EXTENSIVE DEBATE SINCE ALL DIFFERENT CATEGORIZATION PROPOSALS SUBMITTED FOR CONSIDERATION ARE TO BE INCLUDED IN REPORT BY THE WORKING GROUP. NO CONCLUSIONS OR CONSENSUS IS EXPECTED. WE NOW CAN EXPECT GROUPS OF CATEGORIES TO INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING:
ACCORDING TO TYPE OF MUNITION: (1) BOMBS AND BOMBLETS, ROCKETS, ARTILLERY PROJECTILES, MORTAR PROJECTILES, HAND AND RIFLE GRENADES, LAND MINES, FLAMETHROWERS; (2) INCENDIARY BOMBS, FIREBOMBS, GROUND FLAME WEAPONS, ANTI-ARMOR AND ANTI-AIRCRAFT.
ACCORDING TO METHOD OF USE: (1) ANTIPERSONNEL INCENDIARY WEAPONS, ANTIMATERIAL INCENDIARY WEAPONS, WEAPONS WITH SECONDARY OR INCIDENTAL INCENDIARY EFFECTS; (2) WEAPONS OR MUNITION SYSTEMS DESIGNED TO HAVE ANTI-PERSONNEL OR ANTI-EQUIPMENT EFFECT THROUGH FIRE, WEAPONS OR MUNITIONS SYSTEMS CONTAINING INFLAMMABLE MATTER THE PURPOSE OF WHICH IS TO INTENSIFY THE INTENDED EFFECT OF THE SYSTEM, WEAPONS OR MUNITIONS SYSTEMS CONTAINING INFLAMMABLE MATTER THE PRIMARY FUNCTION OF WHICH IS NOT TO PRODUCE INCENDIARY EFFECTS; (3) TACTICAL
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WEAPONS, STRATEGIC WEAPONS, PARAMILITARY WEAPONS.
ACCORDING TO TYPE OF AGENT: METAL-BASED, PYROTECHNIC, PYROPHORIC, OIL-BASE.
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